

CLAIMS

1. An infrared ear thermometer comprising
a housing,
5 a probe coupled to the housing,
an infrared sensor received at least in part within the probe, and
a light adjacent the probe to illuminate an area around the probe when
the infrared sensor is activated by a user.
2. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 1, wherein the light is a
10 light-emitting diode.
3. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 1, further comprising a
light cover coupled to the housing and the probe and wherein the light is arranged to
illuminate the light cover when the infrared sensor is activated by a user.
4. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 3, wherein the light
15 cover is ring-shaped and at least a portion of the probe is received through an aperture
formed in the ring-shaped light cover.
5. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 3, wherein the light
cover is substantially translucent to allow the light to shine through the light cover and
illuminate an area surrounding the probe.
- 20 6. An infrared ear thermometer comprising
an infrared sensor housed within a probe configured to be inserted into
the ear canal of a patient, the probe being substantially cone-shaped,
a light cover coupled to the probe and positioned to encircle the probe,
and
25 a light adjacent the light cover to shine through the light cover and
illuminate an area surrounding the probe when a user places the probe within the ear
canal of the patient.
7. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 6, wherein the light
cover is ring-shaped and an aperture formed in the light cover receives at least a
30 portion of the probe therein.
8. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 7, wherein the light
cover is made of a substantially translucent material.

9. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 7, further comprising a housing of thermometer formed to store electronics of the thermometer therein, and wherein the light cover is coupled to the housing.

10. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 6, wherein the light is a
5 light-emitting diode.

11. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 10, further comprising an on/off button and the light-emitting diode is electrically coupled to the on/off button to be activated by on/off button.

12. A method of reading the temperature of a patient using an
10 infrared ear thermometer, the method comprising the acts of
illuminating an area surrounding a probe of an infrared ear
thermometer,

inserting the probe into an ear canal of a patient to illuminate the ear
canal of the patient, and

15 sensing the temperature of a tympanic membrane of the patient within
the ear canal of the patient.

13. The method of claim 12, further comprising the act of flashing
a light a plurality of times to indicate that the temperature of the tympanic membrane
has been sensed.

20 14. The method of claim 13, further comprising the act of
producing an audible alarm to indicate that the temperature of the tympanic
membrane has been sensed.

15. The method of claim 12, wherein the illuminating act
comprises the act of activating a light-emitting diode adjacent the probe.

25 16. The method of claim 15, wherein the illuminating act
comprises the act of illuminating a ring-shaped light cover around the probe.